American Fisheries Society
August 2023
Management Committee Meeting
Wednesday, August 9, 2023

Participants:

Management Committee Members:
April Croxton, Cecil Jennings, Miguel Garcia Bermudez, Gary Whelan, Leanne Roulson, Jeff Heindel, Brian Nerbonne, Eric Fetherman, Julie Carter, Laurie Earley, Randy Shultz (Constitutional Consultant, non-voting), Doug Austen (Executive Director, non-voting)

ELMA: Matt Mensinger,

AFS Staff: Dan Cassidy, Kelly Kotche, Jenna Hanks, Beth Beard

Key Tasks:

1. Prepare final votes on MC Proxy and Development Committee for action by GB and, if approved, move to full vote of membership at the Business meeting.

Minutes of the Meeting:

1. **Welcome/Determination of Quorum** (need 7 members) – Meeting called to order by April Croxton at 2:02 p.m. EDT. Quorum was established by Randy Schultz.

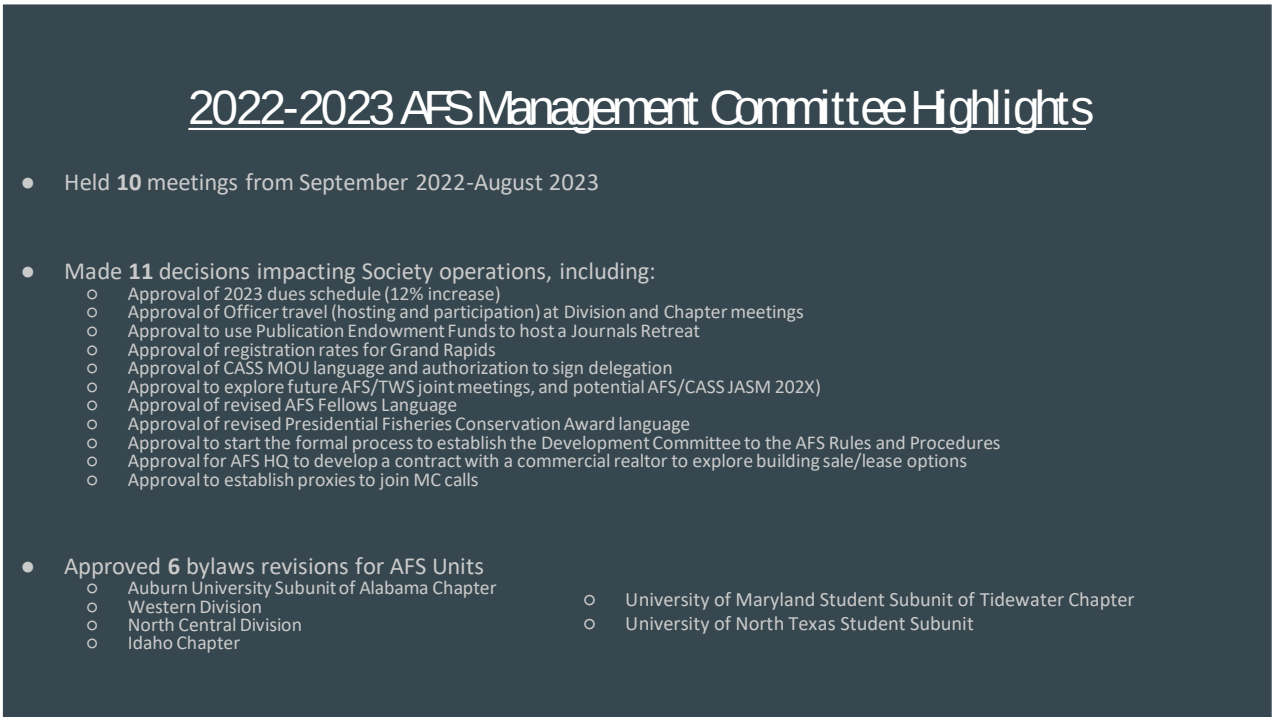
2. **Approval of Agenda**- April Croxton – Motion to approve agenda by Gary Whelan; 2nd by Cecil Jennings as revised by the addition below.
   a. Add a description of the Special Committee appointment to the agenda.

3. **Review of July 14, 2023, Management Committee minutes and Governing Board minutes**. Key tasks include:
   a. Two votes to be on the agenda for Grand Rapids Governing Board and Business meeting are the Management Committee Proxy motion and the establishment of the Development Committee as a standing committee.
   b. Planning officer travel to unit meetings was approved and Divisions should share this with Chapters to start developing requests for participation.

   Motion to approve July Management Committee minutes by Gary Whelan; 2nd Laurie Earley.

4. **Constitutional Consultant Report -** Randy Schultz. No items to be addressed.

5. **Management Committee Year-end Review and Accomplishments** – April Croxton. April recognized the many accomplishments over the past year of Management Committee meetings (see below). This was a very productive year and the work of the Management Committee is greatly appreciated.



6. **Grand Rapids Events**
   a. Likely around 1400 registered.
   b. African Women in Science Group will be coming as a result of JASM.
   c. Strategic Visioning Committee will help to lead workshop with the Governing Board on Saturday and Sunday.
   d. Unit Leaders Reception is set for Monday night 7:30 p.m. in Grand Suite.
   e. Unit leader's workshop – 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. Tuesday, Grand Gallery Overlook AB.
   f. Thursday – 8 AM – April hosting workshop to help units think about DEIA.
   g. Section meetings will include participation by AFS Officers with key messages from incoming president Cecil Jennings.
   h. Substantial suite of DEIJA related activities are offered (Attachment A)

7. **Officers Reports**
   a. <u>April</u>
      i. Hutton retreat had 28 students at University of Arkansas – Pine Bluff. Activities included vegetative plantings, transplanting crayfish, and working with Arkansas Game and Fish Commission on a Fishing Derby. Many thanks to Steve Lochman and Ashley Berniche as well as the many staff of AGFC
      ii. Attending the annual meeting of the Fishery Society of the British Isles

   b. <u>Cecil</u>

i. Focusing on meeting preparation for the Honolulu annual meeting as well as supporting the new Pacific Islands chapter of AFS. Attending the Hawaii Conservation Conference as part of the partnership with the Hawaii Conservation Alliance. This resulted in 1.5 pages of names of people who are interested in learning more about the new chpater
ii. Working with local artists in Hawaii for logos development.
iii. Worked with local partners and Eric Fetherman on the spawning run route.
iv. Writing President's Columns for his upcoming presidential year.

c. Miguel - Getting ready to move into the President-Elect position. Continuing to work on post event action from the Latin America and Caribbean Fisheries Congress.

d. Gary - Meeting preparation for Grand Rapids including plenary talk developing and assisting with meeting logistics. Continuing in his role with the Communication and Strategic Positioning Committees. Has been initiating conversations with the Ohio chapter about the 2026 annual meeting in Columbus, OH.

e. Leanne – working with Grand Rapids team on and Indigenous Outreach Event scheduled for Monday morning. Working with Montana Trout Unlimited group on DEIJ discussion. Has agreed to take on the role of Resource Policy Committee Chair. Working with the Fellows Selection Committee to propose that the committee membership be increased to up to 10, but likely will be 8 or 9 members.

8. Executive Director and Other AFS staff reports

a. Policy updates:
   i. Snake River Dam Removal
      1. Op-Ed in the Idaho Statesman – Doug Austen and Helen Neville (TU Chief Scientists (Attachment B)
      2. CEQ letter on Snake River Dam removal also added to the discussion on the science of Snake River dam removal (Attachment C).
   ii. RAWA funding package in works and moving slowly forward.

b. Special Committee for Publications Contract Rebidding has been established by April Croxton. This is a critical effort since the publishing contract provides about 1/3-1/4 of the AFS budget. This process will need to address the new challenges of incorporating open access to all of our journals with associated different funding models. To assist with this process, we are meeting with other societies to benefit from their experience with new contracts. TWS has done it most recently and is also with Wiley. It was noted that we should also check with FSBI since they also publish with Wiley.

c. Financial update (Dan Cassidy)
   i. Notes that there will be a "First-Timer's event at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday in Grand Rapids.
   ii. Audit Report is complete and awaiting receipt from auditors. Much more detail will be provided in Grand Rapids.
   iii. Bank Credit line is fully paid off.

iv. First check from IRS Employee Retention Credit Program (ERC) - $87,900 – Included both the payroll tax payment but also over $4,000 in interest. We should receive a total of about $350K.
v. Cash account is very solid with $633K cash in bank account at this time.
vi. Glascock Building discussions with HOA is not moving at this time. We are putting this on hold while we work through other options with Montgomery County. This may include a request for a zoning exemption.

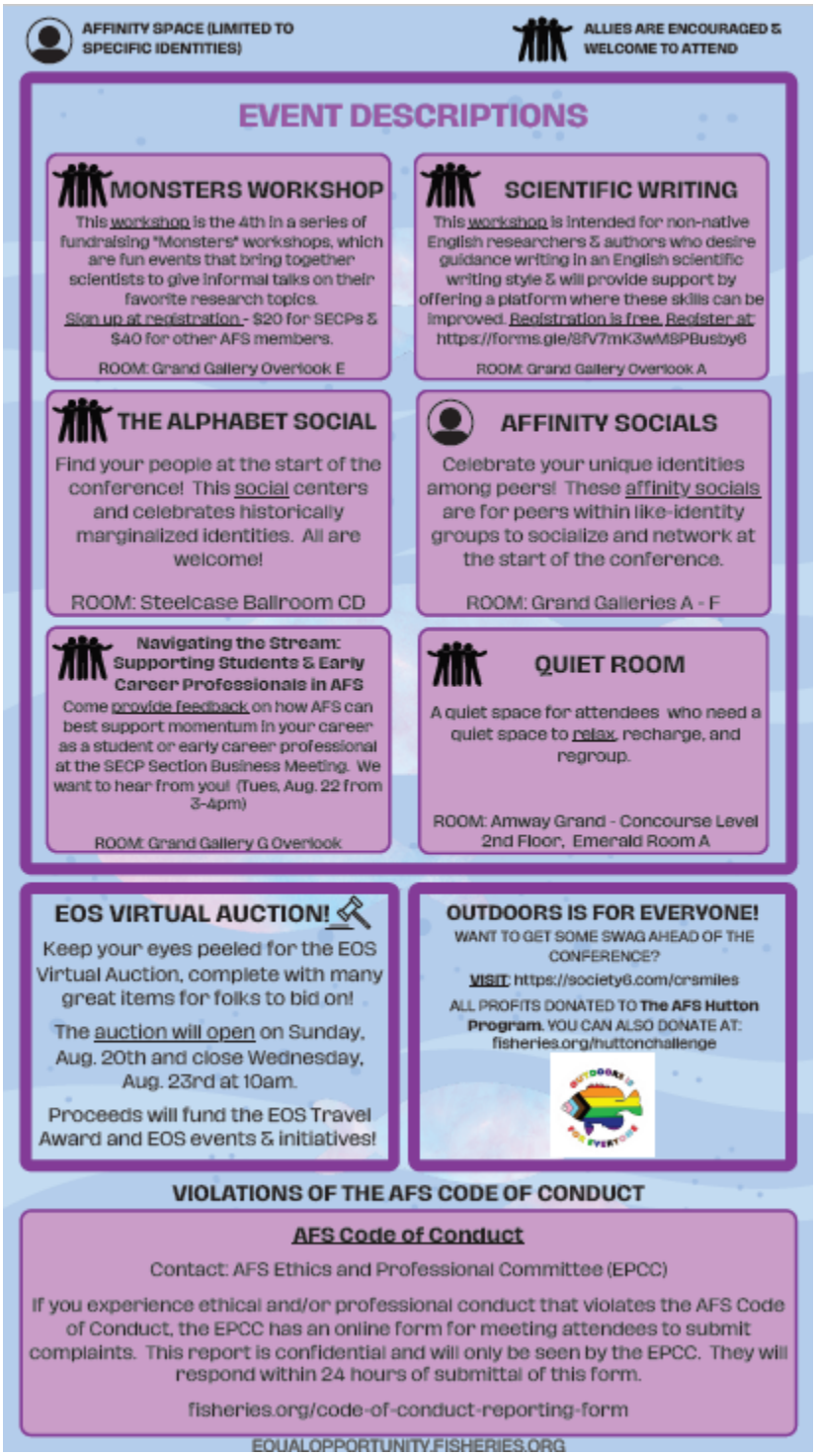
d. Membership report (Kelly Kotche)
i. Down 278 from 2022 with 6,420 at this time. Main shortfalls are with regular members and Early Career members. We are down about 13% from 2019 and our current goal is to attain the 2019 number of 7405. However, dues income is up $27K from last year.
ii. The Membership Survey will be very helpful in addressing the membership shortfalls. We will be spending 45 minutes at GR meeting. The importance of AFS in networking was a key item from survey.
iii. April Croxton noted that she talked to the Coastal Society about professionalism and professional society membership. There was interest expressed in AFS by the attendees and some will be with us in Grand Rapids.

e. CASS update – There are initial discussions on finding a date for a 3rd JASM, possibly in 2028. Through CASS and the NSF_LEAPS project there will be funding available to make meeting more accessible. More importantly, the grant will bring a substantial amount of expertise to the CASS partners. A second NSF grant focuses on annual meetings design to ensure that they are open, engaging, and barrier free. AFS will also participate with CASS in SACNAS (booth being coordinated by CASS).
f. TWS joint meeting is also in progress with further discussions on year/date options moved to early in 2024.

9. Additional Topics and New Business
a. None presented.

10. Adjournment – at 3:05 p.m. EDT

Attachment A – DEIJA events at the AFS annual meeting in Grand Rapids


AFFINITY SPACE (LIMITED TO SPECIFIC IDENTITIES)
ALLIES ARE ENCOURAGED & WELCOME TO ATTEND
EVENT DESCRIPTIONS
MONSTERS WORKSHOP
This workshop is the 4th in a series of fundraising "Monsters" workshops, which are fun events that bring together scientists to give informal talks on their favorite research topics.
Sign up at registration - $20 for SECPs & $40 for other AFS members.
ROOM: Grand Gallery Overlook E
SCIENTIFIC WRITING
This workshop is intended for non-native English researchers & authors who desire guidance writing in an English scientific writing style & will provide support by offering a platform where these skills can be improved. Registration is free. Register at: https://forms.gle/8fV7mK3wM8PBusby6
ROOM: Grand Gallery Overlook A
THE ALPHABET SOCIAL
Find your people at the start of the conference! This social centers and celebrates historically marginalized identities. All are welcome!
ROOM: Steelcase Ballroom CD
AFFINITY SOCIALS
Celebrate your unique identities among peers! These affinity socials are for peers within like-identity groups to socialize and network at the start of the conference.
ROOM: Grand Galleries A - F
Navigating the Stream: Supporting Students & Early Career Professionals in AFS
Come provide feedback on how AFS can best support momentum in your career as a student or early career professional at the SECP Section Business Meeting. We want to hear from you! (Tues, Aug. 22 from 3-4pm)
ROOM: Grand Gallery G Overlook
QUIET ROOM
A quiet space for attendees who need a quiet space to relax, recharge, and regroup.
ROOM: Amway Grand - Concourse Level 2nd Floor, Emerald Room A
EOS VIRTUAL AUCTION!
Keep your eyes peeled for the EOS Virtual Auction, complete with many great items for folks to bid on!
The auction will open on Sunday, Aug. 20th and close Wednesday, Aug. 23rd at 10am.
Proceeds will fund the EOS Travel Award and EOS events & initiatives!
OUTDOORS IS FOR EVERYONE!
WANT TO GET SOME SWAG AHEAD OF THE CONFERENCE?
VISIT: https://society6.com/crsmiles
ALL PROFITS DONATED TO The AFS Hutton Program. YOU CAN ALSO DONATE AT: fisheries.org/huttonchallenge
VIOLATIONS OF THE AFS CODE OF CONDUCT
AFS Code of Conduct
Contact: AFS Ethics and Professional Committee (EPCC)
If you experience ethical and/or professional conduct that violates the AFS Code of Conduct, the EPCC has an online form for meeting attendees to submit complaints. This report is confidential and will only be seen by the EPCC. They will respond within 24 hours of submittal of this form.
fisheries.org/code-of-conduct-reporting-form
EQUALOPPORTUNITY.FISHERIES.ORG

Attachment B – Snake River dam removal OpEd in the Idaho Statesman

The science is clear.

Printed by the Idaho Statesman
Dams must be removed for Snake River salmon to have a future |

Opinion BY DOUG AUSTEN AND HELEN NEVILLE AUGUST 11, 2023, 4:00 AM

Water moves through a spillway of the Lower Granite Dam on the Snake River in this 2018 file photo. NICHOLAS K. GERANIOS AP

As policymakers debate the future of the dams on the Snake River, the American Fisheries Society (AFS), the leading fisheries professional society in the United States, and Trout Unlimited, one of the nation's foremost aquatic conservation organizations, are compelled to set the record straight.

Public policy decisions should be grounded in the best available science. Science tells us that we must remove the lower four Snake River dams to save critically at-risk populations of wild Snake River salmon. The basin's native salmon and steelhead hover on the brink of extinction. Today, only 1-2% of historic wild salmon and steelhead return to the Snake River to spawn above the four

lower Snake River dams. Climate change will continue to worsen the outlook for these coldwater species. Ensuring access to this high-elevation habitat is the best opportunity to promote broad-scale population recovery in the face of warming waters.

Proposals to breach the four lower Snake River dams have a long history, but the subject has become more critical as these populations approach important extinction risk indicators, as emphasized in a 2021 report by the Nez Perce Tribe. The report warns that 42% of Snake River spring summer Chinook salmon have reached a threshold where extinction is highly likely. AFS is a scientific organization of over 7,000 professional fishery scientists and resource managers, many of whom live and work in the western U.S. and have long-studied salmon and their declining populations.

Since its' origin in 1870, AFS has engaged on critical policy issues that affect fisheries when the science is clear and consistent. Each AFS policy statement is grounded in decades of peer-reviewed scientific studies, considered, and voted upon by AFS's board that represent a range of fisheries disciplines and all political affiliations. Because the science is clear and compelling and the situation is urgent, in January, the AFS Board took action to support breaching the lower four Snake River dams.

Salmon and other anadromous fish move between the upriver spawning and rearing habitats and the ocean and back again. Because of the dams, migrating fish face a series of slow reservoirs with water that is often too warm for them, with concentrated predators at each dam; for out-migrating smolts, the trip downstream now takes 10 times as long as it did naturally, greatly exacerbating exposure to these impacts. Fish that make it through the dams may arrive injured, stressed, and weakened, for many leading to "delayed mortality" once in the ocean.

Even when ocean conditions are favorable for their survival, the impacts of the stressful passage prove too much for these fish, which is why decades of science has pointed to the need to reduce these stressors and bolster access to coldwater habitats in the Snake River. But why is breaching necessary — can't we invest in alternative approaches? Restoring healthy salmon populations will require a change in approach. Since the 1980s, numerous strategies, like barging, retrofitting the dams or supplementing stocks with hatchery-raised fish, have been attempted with little or no success.

Despite spending billions on recovery, these species continue to decline, affecting both aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, other imperiled species, tribal rights, and commercial and recreational fishing. While dam removal is not easy, we urge stakeholders to pair this essential action with other innovative solutions that have been proposed to allow fish, local communities, and industries to thrive.

Notably, the Penobscot River project in Maine was accomplished by a combination of breaching, fish passageways, and increased power production for different dams, such that total hydropower production was maintained while restoring fish runs. It is possible to find solutions that support industry, communities, and fish.

As we consider the future of our Northwest salmon and the communities that rely on it, we must make decisions grounded in scientific evidence. As returns continue to decline, decision-makers at all levels must take swift and decisive action to breach the lower four Snake River dams.

Read more at: https://www.idahostatesman.com/opinion/readers-opinion/article278060567.html#storylink=cpy

Attachment C – Letter submitted to the Council on Environmental Quality stating the AFS position on Snake River Dam Removal.

August 9, 2023

Ms. Brenda Mallory
Chair
Council on Environmental Quality
722 Jackson Place, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Via regulations.gov

Re: Columbia River Salmon and Other Native Fish, Docket No. CEQ-2023-0002

Dear Chair Mallory:

On behalf of the American Fisheries Society (AFS), we thank you for the opportunity to submit comments supporting a long-term strategy to restore Columbia River basin salmon and other native, migratory fish populations to healthy and harvestable abundance levels.

AFS is a scientific organization of over 7,000 professional fishery scientists and resource managers across the world, many of whom live and work in the western United States and have long-studied salmon and their declining populations. AFS promotes the conservation and sustainability of fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems through dissemination of fisheries science via scientific journals on fisheries, conferences, and continuing education.

The science is clear and compelling; removing the lower four Snake River dams is necessary to restore critically at-risk populations of wild Snake River salmon and steelhead that hover on the brink of extinction. Today, only 1–2% of formerly abundant, historic wild salmon and steelhead return to the Snake River to spawn (Winters 2023). Recent reports demonstrate that 42% of Snake River wild spring/summer Chinook Salmon and 19% of steelhead populations have declined to the threshold where extinction is highly likely (O'Toole 2021).

Climate change will continue to worsen conditions for these and other coldwater species. Ensuring access to intact and high elevation habitat in the Snake River basin provides the best opportunity for broadscale population recovery and persistence in the face of a changing climate (Storch et al. 2022).

Because the science is clear and compelling and effective action is urgently needed, in January, AFS adopted a policy statement in support of breaching the lower four Snake River dams (Winters 2023). We attach it here for your consideration. The policy statement concludes that "[i]f Snake River basin salmon and steelhead are to be saved, then policymakers and stakeholders at all levels will need to implement appropriate processes and funding provisions to breach the four dams on the Lower Snake River, as well as implement all necessary habitat rehabilitation. There are other services that must be accounted for if dam breaching were to occur."

In addition to this policy statement, we ask you consider the following information as you formulate actions to restore wild, anadromous salmonids and other native fishes in the Columbia/Snake River system:

1. Why is Hydropower not a "green" energy source?

Hydropower dam/reservoir systems are actually not "green" because of their profound effects on water quality, cyanobacteria, instream flow, habitat blockage, and greenhouse-gas (methane/nitrous oxide) emissions (Storch et al. 2022; Twidell 2022; Winters 2023).

2. What constitutes "restoration" of the lower Snake River and what steps should the federal government take to restore the lower Snake River?

Restoration of wild anadromous fish to healthy and harvestable levels is an appropriate restoration goal. In Idaho, recreational harvest of wild Chinook Salmon has been closed since 1978, a 45-year period. Endangered Species Act (ESA)-driven minimum requirements for recovery are insufficient to achieve agreed-upon socially, culturally, economically, and ecologically grounded high range goals as established by the Columbia Basin Partnership (CPB; https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/vision-salmon-and-steelhead-goals-restore-thriving-salmon-and-steelhead-columbia-river-basin).

Decades of science showing lack of effective recovery (Jaeger and Scheuerell 2023) demonstrates the need to breach the lower four Snake River dams to reach this restoration goal (Hatch Magazine 2021; Storch et al. 2022). The need to breach these dams is confirmed by a comparison of smolt-to-adult returns (SARs) versus the number of dams anadromous fish must pass. Recent SARs for Snake River wild spring/summer Chinook Salmon have averaged 0.7% above eight dams, in comparison to SARs for non-ESA listed, wild spring Chinook Salmon above fewer dams in the mid-Columbia River that have sustainable SAR objectives (McCann et al. 2019). From 2000-2017, wild Chinook Salmon SARs averaged 3.6% in the John Day River above three dams, 2.5% in the Yakima River above four dams, and 0.7% in the Snake River above eight dams (op. cit.). The John Day, Yakima, and Snake River populations experience the same treaty and nontreaty fisheries, pinniped predation, and ocean conditions; the primary difference among them is the number of dams they must pass (Storch et al. 2022).

Dam removal will also help meet ecological benchmarks for anadromous fish restoration (Storch et al. 2022). In 2020, the Northwest Power and Conservation Council "reaffirmed the prior benchmark of smolt-to-adult returns (SAR) averaging 4% (range: 2%–6%) for

spring/summer Chinook Salmon… (A) minimum SAR of 2% is required to consistently maintain existing populations, whereas SARs > 2% indicate degrees of population growth... Smolt-to-adult return rates ≥ 4% achieved on a regular basis should promote a high likelihood of recovery (i.e., consistent generational increases in abundance... The Independent Scientific Advisory Board…has reviewed…the 2–6% SAR objective and identified extensive evidence to support these goals..."

Connectivity in the lower Snake River is further critical for steelhead, Bull Trout, White Sturgeon, and Pacific Lamprey. Restoring the Snake River will reestablish opportunities for repeat spawning to maintain their populations (Vadas 2000; Vadas et al. 2016; Storch et al. 2022), as dams and low/warm flows negatively affect immigrations of adults and outmigration of both juveniles and spent adults that survive and may spawn again in future years. This approach has been successfully used in Maine, where dam breaching increased abundances of repeat spawning Atlantic Salmon and nonsalmon species (Chelminski 2015; Whittum et al. 2023; Winters 2023).

3. What considerations should inform the federal government's approach to restoring the lower Snake River?

The science on the need for and efficacy of dam breaching is clear. The billions of dollars spent to date on recovery of Snake River anadromous fish have not been effective (Hatch Magazine 2021; Storch et al. 2022; Jaeger and Scheuerell 2023; Winters 2023).

In the 1990s, 30 scientists from state, federal, tribal, and other entities participated in the PATH (Plan for Analyzing and Testing Hypotheses) process that evaluated SARs and the probability of achieving the interim survival and recovery standards of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries (Marmorek et al. 1998). The PATH analyses concluded that the Natural River option to restore the Snake River (via breaching the four lower Snake River dams) was the only option that would provide recovery. They stated that this option has the *"highest certainty of success and the lowest risk of failure."* (Storch et al. 2022). The PATH conclusions have been reaffirmed by scientific review panels, agencies, and scientists for the past 25 years; here are examples:

- The CSS *(*Comparative Survival Study 2019*)* predicted a two- to threefold fold increase in salmon abundance with the Natural River option and a fourfold increase if dam breach is coupled with maximum spill over the remaining four downstream Columbia River dams.

- In 2021, emeritus scientists with decades of experience working with anadromous fish wrote to the Northwest Governors, "*based on overwhelming scientific evidence, restoration of a free-flowing lower Snake River is essential to recovering wild Pacific salmon and steelhead in the basin*" (Hatch Magazine 2021).

- NOAA Fisheries (2022) concluded that breach must be the centerpiece action to achieve CBP goals, as dam spills are inadequate to sustain native fishes with consistently clean, cold water, particularly in the face of climate change (cf. Storch et al. 2022). Last October, NOAA Fisheries (2022) reported, "To make progress towards healthy and harvestable stocks it is essential that the comprehensive suite of management actions includes: Significant

reductions in direct and indirect mortality from mainstem dams, including restoration of the lower Snake River through dam breaching."

4. What information should the federal government develop to support discussions in the Northwest and in Congress on the restoration of the lower Snake River?

For policymakers to move forward in breaching the dams, it is crucial to develop a clear roadmap for ameliorating the economic (energy/transportation) impacts of breach on those who rely on the dams (Hatch Magazine 2021; Storch et al. 2022; Winters 2023).

5. What considerations should inform the federal government's approach to supporting the Upper Columbia River Tribes' reintroduction plan?

Restoring access and reintroducing anadromous fish must be a centerpiece action to achieve CBP goals for upper Columbia River stocks (NOAA Fisheries 2022). Actions should include restoring Pacific Lamprey runs to Columbia River tributaries (Storch et al. 2022) and improved passage past Chief Joseph and Grand Coulee dams for Chinook Salmon and other native migratory fishes (Hanrahan et al. 2004). These goals serve the purposes of First Nations like the Colville Confederated Tribes.

Thank you for your consideration. For additional questions, please contact Drue Banta Winters, dwinters@fisheries.org.

Sincerely,

Douglas J. Austen, Ph.D.
Executive Director

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